

Employer Identification Number (EIN) (Improved Process) Drop in Article

Beginning on January 2, 2002, taxpayers will be able to call a toll-free number, 1-866-816-2065, to get an Employer Identification Number (EIN). IRS customer service representatives will be available to answer calls Monday through Friday, from 7:30am to 5:30pm customer's local time. Alaska and Hawaii will need to use Pacific Time zone for their calls.

Taxpayers will be able to fax EIN requests 7 days a week/24 hours a day by dialing the fax number to one of three IRS Campus' that will be accepting applications. The instructions on the newly revised Form SS-4, *Application for Employer ID Number*, will indicate which IRS Campus is assigned to their specific state. Detailed information on the EIN process can be found at the IRS Small Business/Self Employed Community Web Site at www.irs.gov/smallbiz, click on Employer ID Numbers. Faxed applications will be processed in four days. The IRS Campus' accepting faxed applications are:

Brookhaven, NY (631) 447-8960

Cincinnati, OH (859) 669-5760

Philadelphia, PA (215) 516-3990

Taxpayers located outside of the United States will continue to call the Philadelphia Campus, their telephone number is (215) 516-6999.

Also, on December 1, 2001, we began accepting third party Form SS-4's. Tax practitioners can now complete the new "Third Party Designee" section on their client's behalf by obtaining the client's signature on Form SS-4. We no longer require that practitioners file a Form 2848, *Power of Attorney* or Form 8821, *Tax Information Authorization* to get an EIN for their clients.

We are currently revising our Publication 1635, *Understanding Your EIN*. It should also be ready and available on our web site on January 2, 2002.

These improvements will help streamline the process of getting an EIN, through reducing the burden on the small business community.

This year, the IRS consolidated the assignment of EIN's to just three campuses. We updated our systems to include additional prefixes to avoid an overflow situation. There is no longer any prefix tied directly to a specific state, however the range of numbers has increased.

Newest Update: The new numbers may present some validation exceptions in systems that had previously been programmed to accept the old codes. For

example, a new EIN for a business in the state of Nevada may be assigned a number beginning with 30, rather than the 88 customers are accustomed to.

The valid range of numbers (01-99) excludes the numbers 07, 08, 09, 17, 18, 19, 28, 29, 49, 78 and 79. All other two digit prefixes in that range are valid.